

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5061

As Reported by House Committee On:

Ecology & Parks
Education Appropriations

Title: An act relating to enhancing the natural resource collections at the Washington park arboretum.

Brief Description: Enhancing natural resource collections at the Washington park arboretum.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation (originally sponsored by Senator Jacobsen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Ecology & Parks: 3/20/09, 3/24/09 [DP];
Education Appropriations: 4/1/09 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Sets goals for the Washington Park Arboretum.
- Establishes the University of Washington Botanic Gardens Endowed Curatorship.
- Creates the University of Washington Botanic Gardens Endowed Curatorship Account.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Upthegrove, Chair; Rolfes, Vice Chair; Short, Ranking Minority Member; Chase, Dickerson, Dunshee, Eddy, Finn, Hudgins, Kretz, Kristiansen, Morris, Orcutt and Shea.

Staff: Jaclyn Ford (786-7339)

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Washington Park Arboretum (Arboretum) was established cooperatively by the University of Washington and the city of Seattle in 1934. The city of Seattle holds title to most of the property and the University of Washington owns, designs, develops, and manages the collections at the Arboretum and the University of Washington Botanic Gardens (Botanic Gardens).

The Botanic Gardens are within the College of Forest Resources, and in turn, the Arboretum is housed within the Botanic Gardens.

The 230-acre Arboretum contains approximately 20,000 trees, shrubs, and vines representing approximately 4,600 different species.

Summary of Bill:

The Arboretum must strive to:

- enhance public appreciation for the aesthetic diversity of temperate wood plants;
- educate the public and regional school population about urban landscape use and the natural biology of temperate wood plants;
- conserve and keep healthy native, exotic, and cultivated woody plants to preserve diversity for future appreciation;
- maintain and enhance collections, exhibits, and facilities to create the best possible ambiance and visitor experience; and
- cooperate with local, regional, national, and international entities that have a similar mission.

The University of Washington Botanic Gardens Endowed Curatorship is established within the University of Washington to support a botanic gardens curator within the Botanic Gardens. The botanic gardens curator must focus on: (1) the preservation, maintenance, and presentation of the Botanic Gardens' collections; and (2) the goals for the Arboretum.

The University of Washington Botanic Gardens Endowed Curatorship Account (Account) is created in the custody of the State Treasurer. All moneys appropriated by the Legislature must be placed in the Account.

The State Treasurer must release money in the Account to the University of Washington Board of Regents for inclusion in the University of Washington Consolidated Endowment Fund when the University of Washington Board of Regents determines that it can match the state funds requested with an equal amount of non-state funds. Distributions from the University of Washington Consolidated Endowment Fund resulting from this investment must be used solely for the purposes of the endowed curatorship.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The curatorship is the scientific link to both the general public and the professional horticulturalists. This bill will give legitimacy for the raising of funds for the collection.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Jim Fridley, University of Washington Botanic Gardens.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Haigh, Chair; Sullivan, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Carlyle, Cox, Haler, Kagi, Probst, Quall, Rolfes and Wallace.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Anderson and Hunter.

Staff: Debbie Driver (786-7143)

Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Education Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Ecology & Parks:

No new changes were recommended.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Botanic Garden and Arboretum is a gemstone of the state which is visited by many people and used by many students as a critical piece of their education. The Botanic Garden and Arboretum features a collection of trees, shrubs, and plants worth over \$80 million; they are in need of a curator. The costs in the fiscal note reflect the long-term expenditures of the proposed legislation, recognizing it would take some time to raise the money. At a time when the University of Washington faces up to 30 percent budget reductions, the institution is asked to find creative ways to fund programs. The intention is to request donations from the public and private sector to raise funds to support the curator.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Jim Fridley and Sandra Lier, University of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.